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7 May 59

29 April 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Resume of OCB Luncheon Meeting, 29 April 1959

PRESENT: Mr. Allen, Mr. Barnes, Gen. Cabell, Mr. Gray, Mr. Harr, Mr. McCone, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Quarles, Mr. Smith

1. Release of Information on Soviet Nuclear Tests

General Cabell described to the Board the action taken by the U.S. Intelligence Board regarding the release of information on the yields of Soviet nuclear tests. Following this, General Cabell had to leave the meeting, just as Mr. McCone arrived. The rest of the discussion was conducted with Mr. Barnes representing CIA. (A complete account of the discussion and the decisions reached is contained in the attached memorandum signed by Mr. Barnes.)

2. Bilateral Agreements on the Storage of Nuclear Weapons Abroad

The Board then discussed the progress in negotiations of atomic military cooperation agreements with certain NATO countries, with particular reference to the impact of these agreements on foreign public opinion. It was generally concluded that from the point of view of psychological impact this situation is not essentially different from any other part of the mutual defense arrangements participated in by the U.S., and the normal interagency coordination is adequate.

3. Navy Religious Services

The Board discussed again the subject of religious services held in the Navy and the possibility of exploiting them in U.S. cold war

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propaganda and information activities. In general, the Board's feeling remained unchanged--that this is not a particularly productive subject for this kind of exploitation.

[redacted] 25X1

C. TRACY BARNES
A/DD/P/P

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DD/P 4-2[illegible]

29 April 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Board Assistant to OCB

SUBJECT: OCB Luncheon Meeting, Wednesday, 29 April 1959

1. General Cabell opened the meeting by describing the action taken by the USIB regarding the release of information on the fission and total yields of Soviet nuclear tests. In effect, he gave the same facts as are set forth in a letter, dated 29 April, from the DCI to Honorable John A. McCone, Chairman of the AEC. He mentioned in his presentation that there have been three alleged instances in which the AEC had released information despite a prior refusal on the part of CIA to agree to such release. At this point, General Cabell had to leave the meeting, and Mr. McCone arrived just as he left. McCone, on being advised of General Cabell's statement, said that as to the three instances it would be better for matters of this sort to be discussed with those involved before being formalized in a letter. He said that he had had very little time to look into the matter but understood the position of his people was that the disclosures had not, in fact, had the result alleged. At any rate, he said that he was not prepared to make any definitive comment at the moment.

2. A discussion followed regarding the release of information, and it was decided that a special group with technical competence should be appointed to look into the matter, bearing in mind that a release of some sort is desirable, if possible. Mr. Quarles stated that, in his opinion, two points were involved:

a. Will the U.S., or will it not, reveal its best estimate of the Soviet fission yield by years?

b. If so, what cover does the U.S. consider is the best one to conceal its methods of computation.

Quarles said that he considered that the first point had been accepted in the affirmative. Consequently, the special group should examine only the second point with a view to making a recommendation satisfactory to the scientists in that it will tend to avoid an accurate conclusion regarding method of computation. It was recognized that the USIB had passed on this point but Quarles and McCone felt that the cover in the USIB formula was not appropriate. McCone also pointed out that as soon as 4 May the Joint Congressional Committee would be reconsidering this point and there would be pressure for some sort of a statement. A fast determination, therefore, is essential.

3. It was then agreed that a group should be formed, chaired by Mr. Farley of the State Department. Dr. Reichardt

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was named by McCone, and I indicated that I thought that the Director would probably select Dr. Scoville. The procedure contemplated was for the group to recommend to the OCB what it considered the best cover to be, and the OCB will then determine whether, in its opinion, such cover is acceptable.

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It should be mentioned that Mr. Harr read to the meeting a press release indicating that Macmillan had just publically released a statement to the effect that the amount of Strontium-90 in the atmosphere had recently been doubled as a result of the Soviet tests last fall. Macmillan specifically stated that this increase had not been contributed to by U.S. tests.

4. The following points brought out during the discussion might be of some help:

a. McCone indicated that although the U.S. has contaminated the atmosphere more than the Soviets over given time periods, still if the most recent time period is selected, i.e. one which goes back only a brief period before the Soviet tests this fall, then the Soviets have a much worse record than the U.S.

b. McCone also pointed out that the geographical location of tests has a bearing on the amount of contamination as obviously does the height of the burst.

25X1

C. Tracy Barnes
A/DD/P/P

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